MINUTES

ALABAMA BAPTIST HISTORICAL SOCIETY

OF THE

THIRTY-SEVENTH ANNUAL SESSION

OF THE

ALABAMA BAPTIST ASSOCIATION,

HELD WITH

MOUNT GILEAD CHURCH, LOWNDES COUNTY, ALABAMA,

OCTOBER 10, 11, 12, & 13, 1856:

AND OF THE

BIBLE SOCIETY

OF THE

ALABAMA BAPTIST ASSOCIATION,

HELD

AT THE SAME TIME AND PLACE.

HAYNEVILLE:

PRINTED AT THE OFFICE OF THE WATCHMAN.

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MINUTES.

Mount Gilead Baptist Church,
Friday, Oct. 10th, 1856.

The Thirty-Seventh Annual Session of the Alabama Baptist Association was held with Mount Gilead Church. Elder D. Lee preached the Introductory Sermon from Matthew 22 ch. 14 v.

After a short recess, the Delegates of the Association re-assembled in the Church. The business of the Association was opened by Elder D. Lee, Moderator.

Prayer by Elder F. M. Law.

Called for the Letters from the Churches, which were read and the names of the Delegates enrolled, as follows:

Shiloh.—C. H. Cleveland, L. Johnson, W. C. Cleveland.*
Centre Ridge.—H. P. Ulmer, C. F. Sturgis, J. H. Lide.*
Mt. Lebanon, Dallas co.—R. Carson, R. Rives, T. U. Robinson.*
Damascus.—M. Bishop, H. S. Staggers, B. Cooper.
New Hope.—S. Bishop, J. Tranum,
Union.—T. T. McDaniell.
Sister Springs.—J. Johnson, S. H. Johnson, J. Carter.
Town Creek.—F. Hardy, L. Edwards, W. W. Hardy, Senr.
Benton.—I. Lyon, J. Brazer, W. Gresham.
Mt. Gilead.—T. Barlow, J. A. Edwards, J. Mealing.
Bethany.—P. H. Lundy, W. B. Haralson, H. W. Caffey.
Ash Creek.—D. Peebles, D. Gordon, E. G. Wagner.
Hopewell.—D. Lee, J. W. Coleman, J. H. Robertson.
Hickory Grove.—J. A. Fonville, F. Armstrong, F. L. Ellis.
Hayneville.—B. B. Rudulph, J. P. Streety, M. Thomas.*
Lowndesboro'.—P. N. Cilley, W. W. James.
Good Hope.—I. U. Wilkes, J. Peagler, A. Peagler.
Elim.—A. J. McLemore, R. H. Molton,* B. F. Caffey.*
Panther Creek.—C. Crow, W. Parker,* J. Frizzel.*
Greenwood.—J. Orum, S. Leverett, A. I. Barnett.*
New Ebenezer.—J. J. Hudson, D. Davis,* J. Boyett.*
Philadelphia.—W. Spradley, M. D. C. Spradley, T. W. Thrower.*
Bethesda.—W. T. Foster, C. R. Waller,* T. Matthew.*
Pine Level.—S. Guice, A. Frazer, W. S. Evans.

Mt. Lebanon, Montgomery co.—G. Long, A. Jones,* V. Person.*
Unity.—L. B. Tatum, D. Holt, B. F. Smith.
Providence.—E. B. Holloway, J. R. Norwood, J. J. Desiker.*
Siloam.—W. Swanner, T. A. Capps, F. Boan.*
Zion.—W. Perry, J. Roads,* G. B. Franklin.*
Montgomery.—I. T. Tichenor, A. B. McWhorter, S. Peters.
Rehoboth.—R. J. Ware.
Spring Hill.—S. M. Crawford, J. S. Holmes,* W. H. Alford.*
Salem.—J. Caffey, R. Wilson, G. W. Brassell.*
Bethel.—J. E. Bell, S. Jordan, R. M. Burt.*
Liberty.—J. H. Lee, J. Crowe, B. Mitchell.*
Note. Ordained Ministers' names in SMALL CAPITALS.
Absentees marked.*

OFFICERS ELECTED.

The following brethren were elected: D. Lee, Moderator, I. Lyon, Clerk, and W. B. Haralson, Treasurer.

Ministers present, not members of this body, were invited to seats.

The following Churches requested and obtained admission into this Association.

Sardis, Butler co.—C. Calaway, D. Kite.
Greenville, " —T. M. Bragg, J. G. Thames.
Elim, Autauga co.—W. C. Stewart, A. L. Haralson.
New Bethel, Lowndes co.—E. T. Bozeman, M. Woodruff,* E. I. Underwood.*

The Moderator appointed the following Committees:

On Preaching.—A. B. McWhorter, H. P. Ulmer, H. S. Staggers, with the Deacons of Mt. Gilead Church.
On Missions.—I. T. Tichenor, W. C. Stewart, J. A. Fonville, T. M. Bragg, J. E. Bell.
On Documents.—P. H. Lundy, J. E. Bell, F. Hardy, D. Rast, A. J. McLemore, J. Johnson.
On the State of the Churches.—M. Bishop, D. Peebles, C. H. Cleveland, S. Jordan, F. L. Ellis.
On Finance.—F. Armstrong, H. W. Caffey, D. Gordon.
Auditing Committee.—T. M. Bragg, A. L. Haralson, J. H. Robertson.
On Periodicals.—J. A. Fonville, A. B. McWhorter, J. Caffey, L. Johnson, R. Carson.

Adjourned until Saturday morning at 9 o'clock.
Prayer by Elder R. Carson.

SATURDAY MORNING.

Met at 9 o'clock. Prayer by Elder F. M. Law.

The Minutes of yesterday's meeting were read and approved, and the roll called. The rules of Decorum were also read.

On motion, Resolved, That funds, not designated in the Letter of a Church, the Delegates from said Church shall direct the same.

CALLED FOR CORRESPONDENCE.

From the Salem Association.—Elder J. T. S. Park.

" " Bethlehem " —Elder A. W. Jones, P. S. Milner, and a packet of Minutes for 1855.

RETURNED CORRESPONDENCE TO THE FOLLOWING ASSOCIATIONS.

Cahaba—To meet at Shiloh, on Wednesday before the third Sabbath in October, 1856; P. H. Lundy, also to write the corresponding Letter.

Pine Barren—To meet at Allenton, Wilcox co., on Saturday before the third Sabbath in October, 1856; D. Peebles, D. Lee, H. P. Ulmer; T. M. Bragg to write the corresponding Letter.

Unity—To meet at Plantersville, on Saturday before the fourth Sabbath in October, 1856; L. B. Tatum, W. B. Haralson, J. A. Edwards; I. T. Tichenor to write the corresponding Letter.

Tuskegee—To meet on Friday before the third Sabbath in September, 1857; D. Gordon.

Bethehem—To meet at Claiborne, Monroe co., on Saturday before the fourth Sabbath in September, 1857; E. F. Sturgis, D. Lee, J. E. Bell; I. Lyon, D. R. Lide, P. H. Lundy, J. G. Thames.

Salem—To meet at Shiloh, near Monticello, in Pike co., on Saturday before the first Sabbath in October, 1857; A. Frazer, M. Bishop, J. E. Bell, D. Gordon, D. Peebles, J. Foster, P. H. Lundy.

Central—To meet on Saturday before the first Sabbath in October, 1857; L. Edwards.

Bethel—To meet on Saturday before the first Sabbath in October, 1857; J. J. Desiker, J. A. Norwood.

To the Alabama Baptist State Convention—To meet at Marion, on Friday before the second Sabbath in April, 1857.

On motion, Resolved, That the Moderator appoint the Delegates.

The Moderator appointed J. A. Norwood, J. G. Thames, H. P. Ulmer, D. Peebles, T. Barlow, M. Bishop, P. H. Lundy, A. J. McLemore, T. M. Bragg, R. J. Ware.

Bro. Barlow being a life-member and therefore entitled to a seat, on motion, it was resolved that Bro. Lee be substituted.

The Moderator appointed P. H. Lundy to write the general corresponding Letter.

On motion, Resolved, That one hour, immediately after the recess of this day, be granted to the Bible Society of the Alabama Baptist Association to hold its annual meeting.

On motion, Resolved, That the Moderator appoint a Committee to nominate a Preacher for the Introductory Sermon and one for the Annual Missionary Sermon, with alternates. The Moderator appointed P. H. Ulmer, A. B. McWhorter, J. Orum.

The next Annual Session of the Association was appointed to be held with Unity Church, Prattville, Autauga county, on Friday before the second Sabbath in October, 1857. Elder C. F. Sturgis to preach the Introductory Sermon, Alternate Elder I. T. Tichenor. Elder D. Pee-

bles to preach the Annual Missionary Sermon, Alternate Elder D. Lee.

The Missionary Board reported. Report adopted. [Appendix A.]

Resolved, That the present Missionary Board and location be continued.

Missionary Board--Location--Hopewell Church, M't Willing, Lowndes Co.

MEMBERS.

D. LEE, *President.*	T. BARLOW,
D. PEEBLES,	E. G. WAGNER,
J. H. ROBERTSON,	D. GORDON,

W. B. HARALSON.

The Committee on Missions reported.

Resolved, That a special committee be appointed to report on that portion of the report of the Committee on Missions, which relates to Elder R. W. Priest, Missionary to Central Africa, and that their report be made the special business for Monday morning. The Moderator appointed C. F. Sturgis, R. J. Ware, C. H. Cleveland, A. B. McWhorter, D. Peebles.

The Committee on the State of the Churches reported. The report, after being amended, was adopted. [Appendix B.]

Adjourned for one hour.

AFTERNOON SESSION.

According to appointment, the Bible Society of the Alabama Baptist Association held its meeting. [See Report at end of Minutes.]

The Association resumed business.

Suspended the order of business.

Resolved, That the Letter from Rehoboth Church be referred specially to the Committee on Documents, to report this afternoon.

Resumed the order of business.

The Committee on Periodicals reported. Report adopted. [Appendix C.]

Suspended the order of business, that Elder F. M. Law and W. Wilkes might obtain subscribers to the South Western Baptist and Home and Foreign Journal.

The Committee on Documents reported on the Letter from Rehoboth Church—That, in view of the distracted condition of our country, a portion of the services on to-morrow be set apart for special prayer that God, of his infinite mercy, would avert all threatened evils and restore peace and harmony throughout our wide and extended country.

Resolved, That Elder W. Wilkes be received as the Financial Agent of Howard College, that he be invited to a seat with us, and that he have an opportunity to present the claims of Howard College, immediately after the special business of Monday morning.

Resolved, That a committee of four be appointed to amend the report of the committee, appointed last year, to re-district the Churches.

The Moderator appointed J. A. Norwood, D. Gordon, A. J. McLemore, J. Orum.

The Clerk having reported, that he held $41,00, contributed at a former meeting of this body, for the purpose of publishing a sermon by Bro. Sturgis, and that he had not done so, because he had not received a copy, after some explanation and discussion, it was resolved, that the subject be laid on the table.

Adjourned to meet on Monday morning at 9 o'clock.

Prayer by Elder M. Bishop.

LORD'S DAY.

At 11 o'clock, according to appointment, solemn prayer was offered to Almighty God, on behalf of our country, by Elder D. Lee, the Moderator, followed by the Annual Missionary Sermon by Elder I. T. Tichenor, from the last 3 verses of the 28th Chapter of Matthew. A collection for missionary purposes was then taken up, amounting to $87,35, $2,65 of which were subscribed by the colored people. In the afternoon, Elder C. F. Sturgis preached from Rev. 14: 6. and at night Elder J. A. Fonville.

MONDAY MORNING, 9 O'CLOCK.

Prayer by Elder I. T. Tichenor.

The Minutes of the two previous days were read, and with some amendments, adopted.

The Special Committee, to whom was referred the report on Missions, reported. Report adopted.

The report of the Committee on Missions, as amended, was adopted. [Appendix D.]

Ordered, That the Treasurer pay to Bro. Tichenor the funds appropriated for Bro. Priest, to be paid to Bro. J. D. Williams, agent for Foreign Missions.

According to appointment, Bro. Wilkes, Financial Agent of Howard College, presented its claims, and was allowed to procure contributions, towards defraying the indebtedness, arising from rebuilding Howard College, amounting to $158,00—Cash $68,00—Pledges $90,00.

Resumed the order of business.

The Committee on Documents reported; the report was amended. In compliance with a recommendation, contained in that report, a collection was made to support a missionary to the colored people within the bounds of this Association. [For amount see Treasurer's Report.] It was further resolved, That the Missionary Board be instructed to prepare a suitable address to slaveholders, in regard to the importance of providing religious instruction for the colored population and ascertaining their views, as to the best mode of providing for and conducting said religious instruction, and that a part of the funds, now raised, sufficient for printing 1000 copies of that address, be distributed under the direction of the Board.

The Report, as amended, was adopted. [Appendix E.]

The committee, appointed to amend the report of the Committee to re-district the Churches, reported. Report adopted. [Appendix F.]

On motion, the following preamble and resolutions were passed:

Whereas, the Association did, at a former session, request the Churches, as far as convenient, to furnish a statement of the amounts paid for pastoral support; and whereas, said request has been overlooked in the returns for the last year, therefore

Resolved, That the attention of the Churches be respectfully called to the subject; and whereas, there is evidently an increasing spirit of benevolence and liberality among our Churches and brethren, and it is desirable to know, at least, to an approximation, what the Association, the Churches, and its individual members are doing for benevolent objects; therefore,

Be it further Resolved, That the Churches, or their deacons, or, by such other agencies as they may think proper, endeavor to furnish this body with a condensed statement of the entire amount, contributed by the members for all benevolent objects, during the next Associational year.

Resolved, That the Moderator appoint ten Delegates, of whom the Moderator shall be one, to meet with the Biennial Convention of the Southern Baptist Convention, to be held at Louisville, Kentucky, on Friday before the second Sabbath in May, 1857. Names of Delegates, D. Lee, P. H. Lundy, R. S. Wilson, T. M. Bragg, J. T. Tichenor, R. J. Ware, J. A. Fonville, A. J. McLemore, C. H. Cleveland, J. A. Norwood.

Adjourned for a few minutes.

AFTERNOON SESSION.

Read and adopted the general corresponding Letter. [Appendix G.]

The Committee on Finance reported. The Treasurer reported.

The last two Reports were referred to the Auditing Committee.

The Auditing Committee reported, that they had examined these reports and found them correct. Report adopted. [Appendix H. & I.]

Resolved, That $164,00, contributed by Rehoboth Church during the last two years, be added to the fund for the Home Colored Mission.

Resolved, That the funds, subscribed on yesterday, be equally divided between the general Domestic and Foreign Missions.

Resolved, That the amount of funds, sent up for Indian Missions, together with $18,50 of unappropriated funds, be paid over to the Domestic Mission Board, for the support of the Indian Missionary, supported by this body.

Resolved, That the Treasurer be authorized to pay to the different Societies their share of the funds in his possession.

Resolved, That any member of this Association, attending the meetings of any other Association, be considered a Messenger to represent this body.

Resolved, That the Constitution and Rules of Decorum of this As-

sociation be published with the Minutes, if the Minute fund will warrant it.

Resolved, That the Bible Society of the Alabama Baptist Association have the privilege of printing their Minutes with those of this body.

Resolved, That 30 Dollars be paid to the Clerk for his services, that he have as many copies of the Minutes printed as the fund will allow, after retaining sufficient to prepay the postage of the same.

Resolved, That the Finance Committee be authorized to pay the Minute Fund to the Clerk.

A very interesting letter, addressed by the sister members of this Church to sister Priest, wife of Bro. Priest, also a Missionary to Central Africa, having been read, it was resolved, that prayer be offered up by the Moderator on behalf of Sister Priest and the female members of this Church. This was accordingly done.

Resolved, That a Committee be appointed to write the history of the Alabama Baptist Association, to be presented at the next meeting of the Association.

The Moderator appointed I. T. Tichenor, D. Peebles, R. J. Ware.

Resolved, That the Moderator and A. B. McWhorter, be added to said Committee.

Resolved, That the Association return their thanks to this community for their kind and christian hospitality to the members of this body during its session.

Adjourned to meet at Unity Church, Prattville, Autauga county, on Friday before the second Sabbath in October, 1857.

D. LEE, *Moderator.*

I. LYON, *Clerk.*

APPENDIX.

[A.]

REPORT OF THE MISSIONARY BOARD.

Your Board met soon after their appointment and have since had meetings quarterly, and also several adjourned meetings.

The first object of your Board was, to secure the services of an aged and experienced Minister, believing that such a one was needed in the field, especially amongst churches recently constituted. For this purpose, we opened correspondence with brethren, who, we believed, were not only able ministers of the Lord Jesus, but good disciplinarians, but we failed to secure their services. In February last, we engaged Elder Robert Keith, who was ordained by the Baptist Church in Selma, at $50 per month; his services to terminate at the commencement of your present associational meeting.

Elder Keith entered on his labors on the 27th of February last. We believe he has labored faithfully and efficiently. He reports, that he

has traveled 1615 miles—preached 107 sermons—delivered 43 exhortations—visited for religious instruction 153 families--baptised 34--received by letter 15—constituted 3 Churches, and reorganized 1 Church.

Your Board did hope that that part of the mission field, where your Missionary has been laboring the past year, would be for the future, self-sustaining; but from information, obtained from reliable sources, we believe, that in consequence of an unusual influx of emigrants from other States to that section, a Mission will be much needed for another year.

There are other destitute sections within your bounds. The eastern portion of Lowndes, and western portion of Montgomery counties are almost, if not altogether, destitute of Missionary Baptist preaching. Something more ought to be done, than has yet been done, to supply the wants of the destitute. Your Board have hitherto been trammeled for the want of means.

Your Board would respectfully call the attention of the Association to the spiritual wants of the colored population. It is true, that many enjoy the privilege of Sabbath instruction. And God has greatly blessed the Gospel to them, as the number of communicants in your Churches clearly shows, but there are many that, in consequence of the distance to places of worship, and other causes, seldom or never hear the Gospel of Christ preached. If they have the Gospel it must be carried to them. The responsibility rests upon us. If we do not give them the bread of life, they must live and die without it! Will not your body take under prayerful consideration, the spiritual wants of our colored people? Your Board are of the opinion, that a Colored Mission, properly conducted, would be, after the first year, sustained by the planting community without subtracting one dollar from your Treasury.

Respectfully submitted.

DAVID LEE, President.

[B.]

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON THE STATE OF THE CHURCHES.

The Committee on the State of the Churches, present the following report:

Many of the Churches have sent up pleasing accounts of gracious revivals and additions to their numbers, while a few are retrograding and complain of coldness: they earnestly crave the united prayer of this body, that they may no longer remain under the cloud of adversity.

Liberty, Union, Good Hope, Hickory Grove, Pine Level, Unity, Providence, Shiloh, New Bethel, Center Ridge and Benton appear to be in a lukewarm state.

Zion, New Ebenezer, Bethel, Bethany, Siloam, Bethesda, Philadelphia, Mt. Lebanon, Dallas county, Damascus, Greenwood, and Town Creek, have all been greatly blessed and encouraged by the cheering presence of the Good Lord. Montgomery, Mt. Lebanon, Montgomery county, Hayneville, Spring Hill, and Salem, are in a prosperous con-

dition, but have not been the happy recipients of the outpouring of Divine favors.

New Hope, Elim, Montgomery county, Hopewell, Panther Creek, and Ash Creek, are prosperous, but have sustained losses by the removal of many of their members.

Sister Springs is progressing, but feels much afflicted by reason of the hand of death on some of her leading members. Greenville, Sardis, and Elim, Autauga county, were constituted under flattering prospects, and are still flourishing.

Your Committee are proud to report universal harmony and order in all the Churches, and that many have experienced gracious revivals in their midst. There have been added, to the various Churches of this body during the past Associational year, 309 members, a clear gain of 240.

Respectfully submitted.

MATT. BISHOP, Chairman.

[C.]

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON PERIODICALS.

The Committee on Periodicals beg leave to report:

We believe the time has come when the great Baptist family should have many, very many, religious papers scattered throughout the length and breadth of our land; and in every Southern State, we ought to have a well conducted and ably edited Baptist paper, and that paper well sustained by Southern Baptists.

Therefore Resolved, That we desire to see the South Western Baptist, the Home and Foreign Journal, and the Commission, in every Baptist family throughout the bounds of our Association.

All of which is respectfully submitted.

J. A. FONVILLE, Chairman.

[D.]

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON MISSIONS.

The Committee on Missions beg leave to report:

The duty of preaching the Gospel to every creature, is too plainly enjoined upon the Churches to need an argument to enforce it. To earthen vessels has been committed the treasure of the Gospel, that the excellency of the power may be of God and not of us. Our field is the world, and to the subjugation of this to the reign of Christ, we are required to bring every means which God has placed in our power. Though we feel constrained to say, that christians have not yet, in this respect, fully realized their obligations to the Cause of Christ, we rejoice to know, that God has owned and blessed the work of our hands.

The Mission within the bounds of our Association presents the most encouraging aspect. Several new Churches have been constituted by our Missionary. Many have been baptized, and our cause has been established in places, before destitute of the Word of Life. Much yet

remains to be done; and we recommend the Association to pursue this branch of its operations, with increased zeal and energy.

Our General Domestic and Indian Missions, under the care of the Board at Marion, are still prospering. The debt, assumed for the Indian Mission Association, has been paid, and more missionaries are now employed among the tribes of the West, than were before. Several of them are sustained by Churches and individuals within our bounds. The Board reported three thousand conversions last year. Though free from embarrassment, it is exceedingly desirable that the means of the Board should be increased, in order that many fields, already white unto the harvest, may be occupied by the laborers of Christ.

Your Committee notice with pleasure, that several of the letters from Churches speak of missions among the blacks. We are persuaded that no people have a stronger claim; and on none could we more advantageously bestow our means and efforts, to promote the Kingdom of God. Large tracts of country, peopled with thousands of them, where no Church is opened on the Sabbath, and where the voice of the living Minister is seldom heard, strongly demand your attention. Should a suitable man be found to occupy such fields, arrangements might be made with the planters, by which this Mission would be almost, if not entirely, self-sustaining. We recommend that your Board be instructed to use their utmost endeavors to employ two missionaries for this class of our population.

Our Foreign Missions, considering the number of our missionaries and the amount of means placed at the disposal of the Board, have succeeded beyond expectation. About the sum of thirty thousand dollars, is all that is contributed by Baptists of the South for this purpose, while, about forty missionaries and assistants, are all that have been employed to preach the Gospel to the hundreds of millions of China and Africa. The Mission to Central Africa is peculiarly interesting. Thousands of the natives have heard the Gospel with deep attention, and we seem upon the verge of the fulfillment of the prophecy—that Ethiopia shall stretch out her hands unto God.

At the last session of this body, a resolution was passed, to endeavor to raise funds to sustain a missionary in this interesting field. Since that time. Bro. R. W. Priest, a native of this State and a man approved by the Foreign Board, passed through parts of our associational limits, and an amount more than sufficient to pay his salary was contributed by the Churches. Many of the Churches having expressed their willingness to adopt him, under the resolution of this body, he was, under these circumstances, set apart to the work of God in Africa, by a Presbytery in the city of Montgomery, in July last, and he and his amiable and intelligent wife are now on their way to the field of their labors.

Your Committee are fully agreed in the opinion, that Associations have no power whatever to bind the Churches to any particular course of action, further than the kind feelings of the brethren of the Churches

themselves may dictate. Your Committee are happy to find, that the amount of over one thousand dollars has already been raised in cash, besides a very considerable amount in reliable pledges, (being several hundred dollars over and above the amount originally proposed to be raised,) thereby giving a pleasing and highly satisfactory evidence, of both the ability and willingness of the Churches of the Association, to support Bro. and Sister Priest in Central Africa.

Your Committee, therefore, feel safe in recommending the following:

Resolved, That we highly approve of the appointment of Bro. and Sister Priest to the Central African Mission—that we feel thankful that God has put it into their hearts to labor in that dark and benighted land:

That we extend to them our most cordial sympathies and fervent prayers for their success in the great work to which they have devoted themselves—and that we will use every effort in our power to raise the amount of seven hundred and fifty dollars annually for their support, so long as God may prosper us, and they may continue in that field of labor.

Your Committee further recommend, that the entire amount over and above seven hundred and fifty dollars, raised during the present year for the Mission to Central Africa, be applied to the payment of the outfit and other expenses, connected with the removal of our beloved Brother and Sister to their field of labor.

Respectfully submitted.

I. T. TICHENOR, Chairman.

[E.]

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON DOCUMENTS.

Your Committee have had under consideration all the documents placed in their hands; consisting only of the report of your Missionary Board, and the letters from the several Churches.

Union Church enquires of the Association the propriety of dissolving. We reply, that it is not within our province, to decide the question. The members of said Church must decide the question for themselves; but we advise said Church to consult our Missionary Board and the missionary now in the field, and let *them*, in conjunction with the members of said Church, decide whether Union shall longer exist as an independent Church organization.

The report of your Missionary Board and the letters from Hopewell and Goed Hope Churches, each, make earnest appeals to this body, to devise some means by which the Gospel may be preached to that portion of our black population, now destitute of the Word of Life. Your Committee feel the importance of said request, but are unable to devise any certain plan by which this important work can be accomplished.

But a small amount, either in money or pledges, has been sent up to the Association for this purpose—hence, anxious as we are, that our colored population should have the Gospel regularly and faithfully preached to them, we are unable to devise any plan, by which certainly

to accomplish the object. And yet, we confidently believe, that if a suitable man could be induced to enter the field, that planters themselves would sustain the Mission.

We therefore recommend, that an effort now be made, to raise three hundred dollars in cash or pledges, and if successful, that our Missionary Board be directed to secure the services of some suitable man, and as soon as possible, place him in the field; and that all the Churches be requested to send up contributions to our next Association, for the accomplishment of this object, so much desired.

Several Church letters report the loss by death of valuable members. We deeply sympathize with the Churches so bereaved. But, at the same time, we would bow in humble submission to the will of Him, who maketh darkness his Pavilion—and rejoice in the belief, that our departed members have only left the Church Militant, to join the Church Triumphant.

We recommend that a letter of dismission from this body be granted to New Hope Church, in accordance with her request.

Benton Church desires aid to build a house for worship. We sincerely hope the necessary assistance will be furnished.

All of which is respectfully sumitted.

P. H. LUNDY, Chairman.

[F.]

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE TO RE-DISTRICT THE CHURCHES.

The Committee appointed to re-district the Churches, recommend the following changes:

1st District.—Shiloh, Providence, Center Ridge, Mt. Lebanon, (Dallas county,) Sister Springs, Town Creek, Bethany.

2nd District.—Benton, Mt. Gilead, Ash Creek, Hopewell, Hayneville, Good Hope, Lowndesboro', Fellowship, Bethel, Elim, (Autauga county,) New Bethel.

3rd District.—Unity, Montgomery, Elim, (Montgomery county,) Rehoboth, Antioch, Salem, Greenwood, Panther Creek, Liberty, Pine Level, Mt. Lebanon, (Montgomery county,) Bethesda.

4th District.—Damascus, Union, Spring Hill, Siloam, Zion, Hickory Grove, Philadelphia, Armageddon, New Ebenezer, Greenville, Sardis.

JOHN A. NORWOOD, Chairman.

[G.]

GENERAL CORRESPONDING LETTER.

The Alabama Association to her sister Associations in correspondence—Sendeth Christian salutation:

Dearly Beloved Brethren: Preserved, as we have been, by a kind Father, through another Associational year, we have the pleasure of addressing you this general letter, and meeting you through our Messengers.

We trust, that we are thankful for the many evidences of kindness, manifested to us, by our Divine Master.

Many of the Churches, composing our body, have been revived and strengthened. Many now rejoice in the hope of Heaven, through the merits of the Cross, that, a few months past, were in the gall of bitterness and in the bonds of iniquity. To God, and God alone, be all the glory.

Brethren, these evidences of a Father's kindness and Savior's love, should animate us to yet higher exertions for the promotion of the Redeemer's Kingdom.

Brethren, let us labor together, with increased faithfulness and perseverance, for the glory of God and the salvation of souls; esteeming it a high honor, to be used as instruments for the dissemination of the Truth, as it is in Jesus.

To this end, let us concentrate all the means and instrumentalities within our control. May God prosper all of your efforts!

In conclusion, Brethren, we earnestly desire to meet with Messengers from each of your bodies, at all of our annual meetings.

May the Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.

D. LEE, Moderator.

I. Lyon, Clerk.

Names of Churches.	Minutes.	Dom. Mission of Ala. Asso'n	General Dom. Mission	Foreign Miss.	Indian Miss.	Benefic. of Howard College.	Bible Distribution
Shiloh,	2 00						
Providence,	2 00	20 00					
Center Ridge,	3 00	5 00	12 50			2 00	10 00
Mt. Lebanon, Dallas co.	3 00	7 00	3 05		2 00	5 00	
Damascus,	3 00	10 00					
New Hope,	1 50						
Zion,	2 00	4 00					
Spring Hill,	1 50						
Sister Springs,	1 50	11 50	5 00			1 00	4 00
Town Creek,	4 00						
Benton,	1 50	20 50					
Mt. Gilead,	1 50	26 00					
Bethany,	3 00	38 10					
Ash Creek,	2 75	35 00			9 00	27 00	28 00
Hopewell,	2 50	25 50					
Hickory Grove,	2 00						
Hayneville,	2 00	10 00	5 00	5 00		5 00	2 50
Good Hope,	2 00	2 25		50	1 25	1 00	5 50
Montgomery,	2 00	58 00					
Liberty,	2 25						
Mt. Lebanon, Montg'y co.	2 25	8 45					
Elim, do.	3 00	20 00			7 00		6 00
Rehoboth,	2 50						
Unity,	3 00	5 00					
Panther Creek,	1 25	2 50	2 50		50		
New Ebenezer,	2 00	5 00		2 00			
Philadelphia,	1 50						
Bethesda,	3 00	10 00					
Pine Level,	2 00						
Lowndesboro',	1 00						
Greenwood,	2 00	3 50			5 80		
Salem,	1 50	5 00					
Union,	1 60	10 00					
Siloam,	1 50	24 00					
Greenville,	1 00	1 50					
Sardis,	1 20	3 00					
Bethel,	2 50	3 00					
Elim, Autauga co.	1 50	10 00	5 00	5 00	9 80	10 00	10 00
New Bethel,	3 00	10 00					
T. M. Bragg,		2 00				1 00	1 00
	82 30	395 80	33 05	12 50	35 35	52 00	67 00

*Paid to Bro. Priest.

†Or more as per subscription.

MITTEE ON FINANCE. [H.]

Southern Baptist Publication Soc'ty.	Central African Mission for R. W. Priest.	Unsupported Native Indian Missionary.	Home Colored Mission.	Unapprop'ted	Pledges Redeemed.	Pledges for next year.	Total.	Pastors' Salary.
							2 00	
	20 00						42 00	
	129 45						161 95	
2 00	46 75						68 80	
							13 00	
							1 50	
							6 00	
							1 50	32 00
							23 00	
	12 60				15 00	16 00	47 60	
	11 50						33 50	75 00
	*47 00						74 50	280 00
	*134 50	9 00					184 60	300 00
10 00	5 00	5 00					121 75	
	8 50		27 00				63 50	
				18 50			20 50	150 00
2 50	45 00						77 00	150 00
	12 25						24 75	
							60 00	
	24 00						26 25	
	25 55						36 25	150 00
	4 00						40 00	250 00
			100 00				102 50	
	12 00				5 00		25 00	
1 00	3 00						10 75	
							9 00	
							1 50	
							13 00	
	50 00						52 00	
							1 00	
	10 00						21 30	
							6 50	†100 00
							11 60	
							25 50	
							2 50	
							4 20	
							5 50	
5 00	5 00						61 30	
							13 00	
	2 00						6 00	
20 50	608 10	14 00	127 00	18 50	20 00	16 00	1502 10	

(I.)

FINANCIAL STATEMENT FROM TREASURER'S REPORT.

ASSOCIATIONAL MISSION FUND.

Amount balance in hand from last year's acc't transferred to new account for Associational year 1857,	$221,74	
Amount *cash* sent up by the churches for this fund	414,30—	$636,04
Pledge from Town Creek Church, $16,00		

DESTITUTE CHURCH FUND.

Amount *cash* in hand for which a Draft is out,		32,95
" Pledges to this fund not redeemed,		30,00

BAPTIST STATE CONVENTION FUND.

Amount received for Gen. Domestic Missions, from Churches,	33,05	
" " ½ Sabbath collection, order Association	43,67—	$76,72
" " for Foreign Missions paid to I. T. Tichenor,		12,50
For the support of Asso's Ind. Missionary, " " Ind. Missions, from Ch's,	35,35	
" " " " from C. F. Sturgis,	27,50—	62,85
" " from C. F. Sturgis, for Sho-Nubbee C. R. Ch's Indian Mission,		50,00
" " for Benefic. Howard Col.		52,00
" " " Bible Distribution,		67,00
" " " South'n Pub. Society,		20,50
For the support of Brother Priest. " " " Cent. African Mission,	343,10	
" " ½ Sabbath collection, order Association,	43,67—	386,77
Of the above Fund, the following amounts have been paid over and stand to Treasurer's credit, to-wit,—		728,34
To I. T. Tichenor for J. D. Williams, Agent For. Missions,	399,27	
" F. M. Law, Cor. Sec. State Bible Society,	67,00	
" Jos. Walker, Cor. Sec. Domestic Missions,	189,57—	655,84
Leaving a balance of to be paid over at the next session of the Convention, or sooner if the Agents call for it.		$72,50

COLORED MISSION FUND.

Amount pledged at the Association, by a number of the Delegates, to this Fund,		390,00
Amount of present and last year's contributions from Reheboth Church for which a Draft has been drawn by the Treasurer on Bro. Moulton in favor of D. Lee, Pres. Board		164,00
Amount of A. J. McLemore's conditional pledge,		50,00
		$604,00
C. H. Cleveland's pledge redeemed,	20,00	
Jonathan Mealing's " "	20,00	
T. M. Bragg's " "	5,00—	$45,00
		$559,00

W. B. HARALSON, Treasurer.

STATISTICS OF THE CHURCHES.

Names of the Churches.	Post Offices.	Ministers.	Clerks.	Baptized	Received by Voucher.	Received by Letter.	Dismissed by Letter.	Excluded.	Restored.	Dead.	Whites.	Blacks.	Whole Number.	Sabbath Meetings.
FIRST DISTRICT.														
Providence,	Orville, Dallas county	J Dennis	J A Norwood	1		1		3		5	36	78	114	4
Shiloh,	Selma, do	do	W Johnson	3		3		1		6	23	205	228	3
Center Ridge,	Richmond, do	C F Sturgis	J W Dennis	9		1	5	3		2	71	157	228	1—3
Mt Lebanon, Dallas co	Pleasant Hill, do	do	T U Robinson	14	1	4	2				77	32	109	4
Town Creek,	Benton, Lowndes county	D Peebles	E W Hardy	43		3	22	4		2	141	89	230	2
Sister Springs,	do do	do	J Johnson	3		3	2	1	1	2	37	64	101	1
Bethany,	do do	P H Lundy	H W Caffey	19		2	4		2		73	135	208	1
SECOND DISTRICT.														
Elim, Autauga co	do do	I U Wilkes	A L Haralson	2				1		1	7	10	17	3
Benton,	do do	I Lyon	J Brazer, p. t.			1		1		1	17	19	36	4
Mt Gilead,	do do	P H Lundy	J A Edwards	8		2			1	11	40	87	127	3
Ash Creek,	do do	D Peebles & I U Wilkes	E G Wagner	6			4	3			36	77	113	2—4
Hopewell,	Mt Willing, do	D Lee	J H Robertson	6		6	1	1		3	81	49	130	1
New Bethel,	Bragg's Store, do	do	E T Bozeman	2			1	2		2	65	17	82	3
Lowndesboro',	Lowndesboro', do	P H Lundy	W W James			2				1			20	2
Hayneville,	Hayneville, do	J A Fonville	B B Rudulph	3		5	1				35	14	49	2
Fellowship,	Sunny Side, do										15	1	16	
Bethel,	Fort Deposit, do	J E Bell	D H Burt	4		18				1	31	3	34	4
Good Hope,	Manningham, Butler co	D Lee	A Peagler			2	2	1	1	1	36	3	39	2
THIRD DISTRICT.														
Greenville,	Greenville, do	Missionary	I T Broughton	6		5							30	
Damascus,	do do	J E Bell	J McLean	20		8	1			1	118	18	136	3
Sardis,	do do	Missionary	T M Bragg, p. t.										13	
Union,	Three Runs, do	J E Bell				2	8				16	1	17	
*New Hope,	Salsoda, do	J S Holmes	S Bishop	5	1	5	3			2	26	2	28	4
Spring Hill,	Millville, do	J S Holmes		7		5	1				39	1	40	
Siloam,	do do	Missionary	W Swanner				4		1		50	4	54	2
Hickory Grove,	Hickory Grove, Montg'y co	J A Fonville	A Dean				5	1			39	11	50	3
Philadelphia,	Argus, do	J S Holmes	J G Cook	22			2				49	10	59	3
New Ebenezer,	do do	J L Nixon	J J Hudson	10	1								42	2
Zion,	Leon, Covington county	Missionary	N B Sims	8		6		4	1	3			40	
FOURTH DISTRICT.														
Unity,	Prattville, Autauga county	P H Lundy	B F Smith	6		4					75	46	121	4—5
Montgomery,	Montgomery, Montg'y co	I T Tichenor	W P Vanderveer	70		46	45	6	5	21	204	445	649	E. S.
Rehoboth,	do do	A T M Handy	R J Ware	17		6	13	6	6				372	3
Elim, Montg'y co	do do	A T M Handy	M McLemore	1		7	18	12	3	3	22	399	421	4
Salem,	do do	R Stewart	J P Collins	3	2	2					14	18	32	1
Antioch,	Mount Meigs, do										35	341	376	2
Greenwood,	Line Creek, do	J M Newman	W Fitzpatrick				7	2			55	3	58	2
Panther Creek,	do do	J Robertson	R H Foxhall	5		2	11		1	3	37	52	89	1
Liberty,	Pine Level do	W T Shanks	J A Mitchell				7	1	6	1	18	26	44	3
Pine Level,	do do	J A Fonville	N D Wright	2		8					26	5	31	4
Mt Lebanon, Montg'y co	Catoma, do	G G McLendon	J R Ray	5		6				1	29	41	70	4
Bethesda,	Strata, do	J S Holmes	J D Foster	19		1	1			1	42	7	49	3
Armageddon,	Oak Grove, do										4	1	5	2
41 Churches.														
*Dismissed.				329	5	166	170	53	28	74	1719	2471	4707	

No reports having been received from Fellowship, Antioch and Armageddon Churches, their numbers are taken from their last reports.

NOTE.—The Clerks of the Churches would confer a special favor upon the Clerk of the Association, if, in their future reports, they would follow the precise order of this Table.

CONSTITUTION

Of the Alabama Baptist Association.

Article 1. This Union of Churches shall be known and distinguished by the style and title of the Alabama Baptist Association.

Art. 2. This Association shall be composed of Representatives from the Churches in union. Each Church shall be entitled to three Representatives, who shall be required to furnish satisfactory evidence of their appointment by the Churches, before they take their seats.

Art. 3. The Delegates, when convened, shall organize themselves into a deliberative body, by the appointment of a Moderator and a Clerk. These officers shall be chosen by ballot at each Annual Meeting, and continue in office until new ones are chosen.

Art. 4. The Association shall not interfere with the rights of the Churches of which she is composed. She shall regard them as independent bodies, in all measures of internal government, and shall only act as an advisory council; assuming no authority, except what is expressly delegated to her by the Churches, or evidently implied by the very nature of this compact. She, nevertheless, claims authority over her own members, the Delegates of the Churches; and, in justice and propriety, must have power to withdraw from, and disown all Churches, that depart from the principles of this compact, by becoming heterodox in faith or disorderly in practice. She should, therefore, regard all the Churches, united under the Constitution, with a vigilant eye for good. Her principal business shall be to promote the declarative glory of God, by extending his kingdom of grace on earth, through the medium of preaching the Gospel and other means in accordance with that Gospel; to cultivate union and fellowship with all the Churches of Christ, and especially, with those united in this Association.

Art. 5. Newly constituted Churches, or Churches dismissed from other Associations of the same faith and order, may be admitted into this union, on their sending up their Delegates to an Annual Meeting, with a petition; and by those Delegates, agreeing to the Abstract of Principles, adopted by this Association.

Art. 6. The Churches in this union shall transmit, to every Annual Session of the Association, written communications, specifying the names of the delegates, number in fellowship, baptized, received by letter, dismissed, excluded, restored, deceased since the last session, and all other information, which the Churches may deem of importance, which shall be read and minuted accordingly.

Art. 7. This Association shall have a fund, supplied by the voluntary contributions of the Churches; and all moneys thus contributed, shall be transmitted from the Churches, and paid over through the Committee on Finance to the Treasurer, who shall be elected by ballot, and hold his office during the pleasure of the Association. He shall receive and manage the funds, according to the order of the Associa-

tion, and present annually, for insertion in the Minutes, a clear and full statement of all receipts and expenditures.

Art. 8. This Association shall furnish the Churches with the Minutes of every Session.

Art. 9. This Association shall take cognizance of no query, sent up from the Churches, unless they have endeavored to solve the same and have failed; nor of any difficulties between churches, unless they have pursued the directions contained in the 18th chapter of Matthew, and have not been able to settle them; then, the Association shall take such matters into consideration, and act upon them at her discretion.

Art. 10. It shall be the duty of the Clerk of this Association to keep a regular file of printed Minutes of every session of this body, and deliver over the same to his successor in office.

Art. 11 This Association, when convened, shall be governed by proper Rules of Decorum, which she is authorized to form and amend according to her own views.

Art. 12. This Constitution may be altered or amended, at a regular meeting of the Association, by a concurring voice of two-thirds of the members present: Provided, such alteration or amendment be approved by a majority of the Churches.

RULES OF DECORUM.

I. The Moderator shall fill the Chair, and preserve order in the Association; which shall be opened and closed by prayer, either by himself or some other individual.

II. The privileges and authority of the Moderator shall be respected by all the members; yet, he shall not be arbitrary in exercising them; he shall decide questions of order and propriety; but from his decisions, an appeal, if seconded, may be made to the Association; and the decision of the Association shall be binding on all parties.

III. The Moderator shall vote in no case, unless the Association be equally divided; then, he shall give the casting vote. He shall have the same privilege of speaking, as other members, provided he call some other person to the Chair.

IV. But one member shall speak at a time, who shall rise from his seat and address the Moderator only. He shall not be interrupted, unless he depart from the subject, or make use of personal reflections. He shall not speak oftener than twice upon the same subject without leave from the Association, unless to explain, what may have been misunderstood or misrepresented.

V. No member shall vacate his seat without leave of the Moderator.

VI. When a question is taken up, after allowing time for deliberation, the Moderator shall take the voice of the Association on the subject, by requiring the members on the affirmative of the question, to rise from their seats; and, if it be necessary, those on the negative also. The Moderator shall announce the decision before he resumes his seat.

VII. Motions, and amendments to motions, if seconded, must be con-

sidered, unless withdrawn. The usual order in deliberative bodies shall be observed in disposing of them by this Association.

VIII. The list of the names of the delegates shall be called over, and the Constitution and Decorum, or any part thereof, read, as often as the Association may direct.

IX. The Clerk shall enroll the names of the delegates, minute the proceedings of the body, and discharge such other duties as the Association may direct.

X. The Minutes of the Association shall be read and corrected, if necessary, and signed by the Moderator and Clerk, before the Association rises.

MINUTES OF THE

Second Meeting of the Bible Society of the Alabama Baptist Associaion.

Mt. Gilead Church, Oct. 11, 1856.

The President, C. F Sturgis, called the meeting to order. Prayer by F. M. Law.

The Treasurer read his report, showing, that he had received at the last meeting $60 30, which he paid to F. M. Law, Agent of the Alabama Baptist Bible Society. Report adopted. The Constitution was read.

Resolved to elect the Officers of the Society by acclamation.

OFFICERS.

C. F. STURGIS,	President.
D. LEE,	1st Vice President.
R. J. WARE,	2d do.
J. A. NORWOOD,	3d do.
I. LYON,	Sec'y and Treasurer.

LIFE DIRECTORS.

C. H. Cleveland, D. Lee, I. T. Tichenor.

An opportunity was offered to persons present to become members. The following subscribed one dollar each:—I. Lyon, S. H. Johnson, J. Johnson, L. B. Tatum, R. Carson, J. T. S. Park, J. A. Fonville, D. Holt, J. G. Thames, J. Peagler, A. Peagler, B. Cooper, I. U. Wilkes, E. B. Holloway, J. Crow, J. E. Bell, T. M. Bragg, S. Guice, W. Perry, J. McLean, R. R. Hardy, C. Callaway, J. Peters, E. Frazer, J. Brazer, S. Jordan, J. Carter, A. B. McWhorter, I. T. Tichenor, B. F. Smith, W. W. Hardy, Senr., D. Rast, W. L. Evans, W. B. Haynes, E. Mock, R. Summerlin, R. Rives, M. H. Whatley, E. Sherrer, H. S. Staggers, D. Peebles, M. G. Peebles, D. Lee, P. H. Lundy, W. B. Haralson.

R. J. Ware was made a Life Member by C. H. Cleveland contributing Ten Dollars and C. H. Cleveland a Life Director, by R. J. Ware's contribution of Twenty Dollars. D. Lee was made a Life Director by contributions of Two Dollars each from F. L. Ellis, E. Gordon, F. M. Law, L. Edwards, E. Sherrer, C. H. Cleveland, J. A. Norwood, D. Rast, F. Armstrong, W. Gresham. And I. T. Tichenor, a Life Director, by the same amount, from C. F. Sturgis, D. Gordon, D. Lee, C.

H. Cleveland, R. J. Ware, F. W. Hardy, E. M. Dillard, A. B. McWhorter, A. J. McLemore, L. Johnson.

Amount collected $115 50.

45	Members for the year, - - - - - -	$45 00
1	Life Member, - - - - - -	10 00
3	Life Directors, - - - - - -	60 00
	A Friend, - - - - - -	50
		$115 50

Resolved, That the funds collected for the Bible Society be paid to F. M. Law.

Resolved, That members of this body, who may be present at the meeting of the State Society, shall represent us in that Society.

Resolved, That all unfinished business be referred to the Board.

Resolved, That the Minutes and Constitution of this Society be appended to those of the Alabama Baptist Association, that body consenting, and that this Society will pay her pro rata.

Resolved, That we adjourn to meet with the Association at Prattville.

C. F. STURGIS, President.

I. LYON, Secretary.

CONSTITUTION.

Article I. This Society shall be called the Bible Society of the Alabama Baptist Association.

OF MEMBERS.

Art. II. This Society shall be composed of the following classes of persons:

1st. Of all the messengers sent up with funds from congregational or other local Bible Societies, which shall be entitled to one delegate for every five dollars sent up.

2d. Of representatives of Churches, Missionary Societies, Sunday Schools, or any other bodies which shall send up funds, one delegate for every five dollars sent up.

3d. Of all persons who shall have paid ten dollars or more at any one time, to this Society, or to any one of its auxiliaries. Such persons shall be counted members for life.

4th. Of all persons who are present at any meeting of the Society and contribute the sum of one dollar, who shall be considered members for the year.

Art. III. The object of this Society shall be to aid in the circulation of the Holy Scriptures; and the funds collected by us shall be sent up to the State Baptist Bible Society of our own State.

OF OFFICERS.

Art. IV. The officers of this Society shall be, a President, three Vice Presidents, a Secretary and Treasurer, who shall perform the duties common to such officers in similar organizations; and shall be elected

by a plurality of votes at each annual meeting; and in case of a failure to elect, shall hold their places until another meeting.

OF MEETINGS.

Art. V. The regular annual meetings of this Society shall be held at the same time and place with the meetings of our Association, at which the following order of business shall be observed:

1st. The reports of the Treasurer and of the Board of Directors shall be read.

2d. A sermon, or other address or addresses suitable to the occasion, shall be delivered.

3d. An opportunity given to those present to become members, by subscribing or contributing to our funds, and a general collection taken up.

4th. Officers elected for the next meeting. An adjourned meeting may be held at any time, or one may be called at any time, by the President or either of the Vice Presidents.

OF LIFE DIRECTORS.

Art. VI. Any persons who shall contribute to our funds the sum of twenty dollars, at any one time, or in two annual instalments, shall be considered life directors, and with the officers of the Society, shall constitute a Board to attend to any business in the intervals of the regular meetings.

Art. VII. This Constitution may be altered or amended by a vote of two-thirds of the members present at any regular meeting.

ADDRESS OF ORDAINED MINISTERS OF THIS ASSOCIATION.

NAMES.	POST OFFICES.	COUNTIES.
C. F. STURGIS,	Richmond,	Dallas.
R. CARSON,	Pleasant Hill,	"
D. PEEBLES,	Benton,	Lowndes.
P. H. LUNDY,	"	"
I. LYON,	"	"
E. I. UNDERWOOD,	Bragg's Store,	"
D. LEE,	Mt. Willing,	"
J. A. FONVILLE,	Hickory Grove,	"
J. E. BELL,	Kirkville,	Butler.
I. L. NIXON,	Salsoda,	"
I. U. WILKES,	Greenville,	"
R. KEITH,	"	"
M. BISHOP,	"	"
I. T. TICHENOR,	Montgomery,	Montgomery.
R. STEWART,	Wetumpka,	Autauga.

Total 15.

MT. WILLING, OCT. 16, 1856.

TO THE PLANTERS OF MONTGOMERY, LOWNDES, DALLAS, AND ADJOINING COUNTIES.

GENTLEMEN:

At the Annual Meeting of the ALABAMA BAPTIST ASSOCIATION, recently held with Mt. Gilead Church, at Church Hill, it was unanimously

"*Resolved*, That the Mission Board be instructed to prepare a suitable address to slaveholders in regard to the importance of providing proper religious instruction for the colored population; and ascertain their views as to the best modes of preaching the Gospel to the destitute colored people amongst us."

The obligations of the Church of Christ are imperative. "Go, ye," said the blessed Saviour, "into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature." The Gospel is being proclaimed in every clime, and in almost every tongue. And God has, in his providence, placed many of the sons of Ham under our guardianship. The relationship existing between master and servant amongst us, is but the fulfilment of a purpose of God as revealed in His word! "God shall enlarge Japheth, and he shall dwell in the tents of Shem, and Canaan shall be his servant.—Gen. 9 c., 27 v.

The history of Africa, and the present degraded condition of the sons of Ham on that continent, when compared with the condition, moral and social, of our slave population, clearly show that God's purpose towards them was benevolent.

There position is peculiar. The Missionaries of the Cross from the Northern States, and from Europe may go every where,

and preach the Gospel to every creature, except to our colored people. Here they cannot labor for obvious reasons. The entire weight of responsibility therefore rests upon us. If christian masters do not give the Gospel to their servants, they must live and die without it! In the vicinity of the Churches our servants receive the benefits of religious instruction; and God has greatly blessed the Gospel to their salvation. The number of communicants amongst them is large. But there are many plantations too remote from houses of worship, for the slaves upon them to attend the services of the sanctuary. There are also serious objections with many planters to their servants leaving their premises. Not that they are unwilling for their slaves to receive religious instruction; but there are temptations to which they are almost always liable to be exposed from which it is the duty as well as the interest of masters to guard them. It is the spiritual wants of those, who are thus situated that claim our attention. What ought to be done? The Gospel ought to be preached to them because God has commanded it. The Alabama Baptist Association has raised a fund for this purpose; and instructed her Missionary Board to confer with *you*, as to the best modes of giving religious instruction to our slaves.—The Board would not, if they could, intrude a missionary where his labors are not wanted. We would therefore respectfully and especially ask your co-operation. As to what can be done? much will depend upon slaveholders themselves, especially planters. We need information—

1st. Whether it be your wish that the Gospel of Christ be preached to your servants?

2ndly. Where? At your plantations, or at some other place in your community?

And 3rdly. At what time? On the Sabbath only, or on other days?

The Board would respectfully suggest that planters confer freely with each other, and inform us by letter what are their views and wishes on this subject.

The Board will under no consideration employ a missionary of *doubtful character* to preach to our colored people. They believe it would be better to have none. But from the past history of God's providence they take courage. God has always raised up men, of suitable qualifications, to labor in his vineyard, when his Church was ready to sustain them. Let us do our duty, and then look to God "to send laborers into his harvest." All that is designed is to give religious instruction orally.

There is perhaps no part of God's moral vineyard more important; and certainly none which imposes upon us such strong obligations, and so imperatively demands our immediate attention. If we do not cultivate it, it must, so far as neglected, remain a moral waste, unless God should deal with us as he did with Israel of old—"Let out his vineyard unto other husbandmen which shall render him the fruits in their season."—See Matthew 21 c., 41 v. And may we not fear the displeasure of God if we neglect the salvation of our servants. The preaching of the Gospel of Christ can never produce insubordination; but contrarywise. The Gospel teaches obedience. "Exhort servants to be obedient unto their own masters, and to please them well in all things; not answering again; not purloining, but showing all good fidelity; that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things.—Titus 3 c., 9, 10 v.

We have now plainly stated our object, and will be thankful for any information on this subject.

Please address E. G. Wagner, Secretary of the Board, Mt. Willing, Lowndes county, Alabama.

DAVID LEE, *Pres.*
DAVID PEEBLES,
W. B. HARALSON,
DAVID GORDON,
J. H. ROBERTSON,
THOS. BARLOW.

E. G. Wagner, *Secretary.*

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